

The Secretary of State



Speech

August 2, 1976
Boston, Mass.

Office of Media Services
Bureau of Public Affairs

THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA: STRENGTHENED TIES FOR AN ERA OF CHALLENGE

Secretary Henry A. Kissinger before the Annual Conference of the National Urban League.

More than a century ago Abraham Lincoln remarked that Americans were the "Almighty's almost chosen people." Whether he meant that the Almighty had given us careful consideration and decided to pass us by, or whether he was simply being modest on our behalf, I do not know. I prefer to believe, however, that he meant that America had been provided with everything—material and spiritual—needed to lead the world toward a better time, and that the rest was up to us.

In the 111 years that have passed since an assassin's bullet ended Lincoln's life Americans have done much to make this a better world. More than any other nation, America has stood in opposition to intolerance, poverty, and war. We have offered a haven to the homeless, and food to the hungry; we have striven to bring hope to the down-trodden and freedom to the oppressed. Being human, we have known prejudice, injustice, and cruelty; our institutions have sometimes been rigid and unresponsive. But being a nation of principle, our values have goaded our conscience; we have regularly produced sweeping movements for change which have given new impetus to our institutions, and fresh dedication to our people. Americans have never been satisfied with what we were, so long as it was less than what we knew it should be.

The Urban League epitomizes those qualities. This organization has worked tirelessly against prejudice and for equality with wisdom and uncompromising principle. The League has been a part of the conscience of our time. I have known this personally since the 1950's because of my friendship with Lester Granger, one of the founders of the Urban League. He was a fine man and a distinguished American who felt deeply that genuine progress for black and white alike could only come through cooperation. Because of that friendship and because of the distinguished work of this organization it is a special honor for me to be here today.

My purpose is to speak to you about the foreign policy of the United States, and in particular about Africa. No part of the world more challenges American purposes and values than that vast and vital continent.

There is, first, a profound human and moral dimension to America's ties with Africa. Three months ago I stood in the dank cells of a slave prison on the Isle of Goree in Senegal, from which hundreds of thousands of Africans were forcibly transported to the New World. I was deeply moved by that grim and awesome scene. The institution of slavery still remains—and always shall remain—the worst blot on the history of our nation. It has affected the lives of every American who has ever lived. Its bitter residue continues to this day. Our challenge now is to show the world that the two races who began their association so tragically can

surmount the legacy of the past and learn to live together in freedom and harmony, based on a recognition of their common humanity.

History has linked America to Africa in a special bond. The heritage and the struggle of 23 million black Americans has inspired throughout this country a profound awareness of—and support for—the aspirations of the African peoples who seek their freedom and their future against great odds. In this generation the assertion of black nationhood in Africa has coincided with the new affirmation of equality, dignity, and justice in the United States. Americans know that the values their country stands for—peace, equality, economic opportunity, and national independence—are today being tested in Africa as nowhere else in the world.

The moral imperative behind our African policy is reinforced by practical considerations. With the sweep of political independence and economic interdependence, Africa, in less than a decade, has assumed great importance in world affairs. It is a continent of immense size, strategically located, with nearly 50 nations of increasing weight in the world scene. Its vast natural resources are essential elements of the global economy. In the last 20 years direct American investment in black Africa has tripled. Trade has grown at an even faster rate. Africa's importance to us as a producer of energy and commodities and as a market for our own products is substantial and bound to grow in the future. It is also important for the other industrialized democracies; Western Europe's and Japan's combined trade with Africa now exceeds \$30 billion a year.

An independent and thriving Africa is essential not only to America's national interest and moral purpose but to global stability and progress as well.

America's Global Responsibility and Africa

I do not want to pretend that the realization of the significance of Africa has come easily to American policy. It grew out of painful experience. But whatever past omissions, the lesson has been learned. And we will now pursue our new African policy with conviction and dedication.

To be effective our foreign policy must be global; to be realistic, it must be complex; to be lasting it must be rooted in the hearts as well as the minds of the peoples it is designed to serve.

That global policy is the product of necessity, and of the American people's moral and practical interest in the peace of the world and the progress of our fellow man. Africa has an important place in that design. The fundamental principles of our policy and the basic issues of our time are being tested there. We cannot achieve our worldwide foreign policy goals if we do not strive mightily for them in Africa.

The United States is the world's strongest nation—militarily, economically, and in our commitment to democracy. When we fail—for whatever reasons—to use our strength for peace and progress there is a gap that no one else can fill. Without our vigilance there can be no global security; without our support for friends, there can be no regional balances; without our cooperation, there is no realistic hope for advancement of the new nations. Without our espousal of freedom, justice, and human dignity, their cause will fade.

And the reverse is equally true: Never before has our well-being been so affected by events abroad. America's peace and safety rest crucially on a global balance of power; our prosperity depends on a flourishing international economy; our future is bound up with the fate of freedom around the world.

But the world of the 1970's is more diverse, fluid, and complex than was the quarter century following the Second World War. Our strength has become less predominant, our margin for error has narrowed, our choices are more difficult and ambiguous. New centers of power have emerged—including stronger allies, and more assertive energy and raw material-producing nations. There is now a substantial nuclear balance between the nuclear superpowers. The once monolithic Communist bloc has been fractured by bitter rivalries. The economic system links all nations' fortunes, but the developing nations rightly claim a greater role in it. The colonial and cold war structures of international relations have come to an end, but a new accepted international system has yet to take their place. To shape a new pattern of global relations assuring peace, freedom, and progress is the foremost task of our time.

In pursuit of this objective we have consolidated our partnerships with our principal allies, the great industrial democracies of Western Europe, North America, and Japan. We have resisted

attempts to tip the global balance or to threaten the independence of smaller nations. We have sought to reach beyond security to a relationship more hopeful than a balance of terror constantly contested. And we have striven to engage the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America in full and constructive participation in the international order.

Today, all these global challenges have a crucial African dimension. The nations of Africa face a uniquely difficult task. A continent of vast wealth and potential is fragmented by the arbitrary boundaries of the colonial era. Tribal differences divert energies and resources; racial hatred smothers the spirit and the talents of both its victims and its advocates. National identity—a concept often taken for granted in other parts of the world—must, in many African countries, be consciously created in an almost impossibly short span of years. An enterprise of nation building is being pursued at a rate and in ways which have no parallel in human experience.

And in the last two years, the pace of change in Africa has accelerated in every dimension:

- The sudden collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire created fundamental changes in southern Africa. Efforts to negotiate the racial conflict in Rhodesia and Namibia stalled. The forces for moderation in black Africa risked being discredited. Radical movements and guerrilla violence were on the rise.

- Worldwide recession and the sharp rise in oil prices had a drastic impact on the world's poor nations, many of them African. Developing countries began to form blocs to challenge the industrial countries, threatening new cartels and economic warfare.

- Factional divisions within liberation movements drew outside powers into confrontation in Angola. After Angola there was a general fear that foreign intervention would spread to other conflicts in southern Africa. Responsible Africans feared that the peace, integrity, unity, and independence of the continent were gravely threatened.

The United States could not remain indifferent to these trends. We decided to exert our influence in the search for negotiated solutions in

southern Africa before time ran out; to seek new ways to foster Africa's economic development and progress; and to buttress the principle of African solutions for African problems in the face of the growing danger of foreign intervention.

President Ford made the courageous decision for these reasons to send me on a mission to Africa. It was essential to provide responsible African leaders with a moderate alternative to the grim prospects of violence so rapidly taking shape before them; it was time to strengthen U.S.-African relations in ways with which Africans could identify and cooperate. The new impetus we gave to our policy in Africa was designed to demonstrate that there is a positive and peaceful road open to fulfill African aspirations and that America can be counted on for understanding, advice, and assistance.

Against this background, let me discuss in greater detail our response to the three principal challenges:

- Africa's quest for self-determination and human dignity in southern Africa and throughout the continent;
- Africa's striving for economic progress; and
- Africa's determination to preserve its unity and freedom from outside interference and great-power rivalry.

Southern Africa

Late last year the situation in southern Africa took on a new and more critical dimension with implications not only for the peace, independence, and unity of Africa, but for global peace and stability. For the first time since the end of the colonial era in the early 1960's, external interventions had begun to overwhelm an essentially African problem. The political evolution of Angola was slipping out of African control toward determination by outsiders. The United States was prevented by congressional action from assisting its friends in their efforts to counter foreign intervention and negotiate a compromise African solution.

After Angola, there was concern that the precedent of external intervention would spread to Rhodesia where a guerrilla war was already taking place. The white minority regime there, representing only four percent of the population, is not recognized by a single government in the world. The negotiations which it had conducted with

black leaders had broken down and guerrilla actions had intensified. Even moderate African leaders began to urge a military solution.

To reverse these trends, the United States set forth a comprehensive program in Lusaka, Zambia in April. We put our weight behind a British proposal for majority rule in Rhodesia within two years. We stated our readiness to help a new majority-ruled Rhodesia in its peaceful transition to an independent Zimbabwe and after. We stressed the importance of racial peace and equality, including minority rights.

The United States is working hard to carry forward this program. We are consulting closely with the leaders of black Africa, Western Europe, and South Africa to promote equitable solutions. We are not seeking to impose an American blueprint; instead we are doing our best to encourage the African parties involved to negotiate a settlement in which black and white can coexist and cooperate for Africa's future on the basis of equality, dignity, and peace. The United States, together with others, stands ready to help the parties overcome the economic dislocations which inevitably will accompany the process of change in southern Africa.

In recent weeks we have heard charges that through its policy toward Rhodesia the United States is raising the likelihood of violence and of civil war.

The truth is just the opposite. There is bloodshed and civil war now and has been for years. The violence is certain to increase. The Rhodesian authorities—recognized by no one—face an impossible task. The issue is not whether change will take place, but how—whether by violence or by peaceful means; whether the future of southern Africa will be determined by guns or through accommodation. The answer will determine what legacy will be left to the peoples of southern Africa. What we seek is the only alternative to intensified conflict: a negotiated settlement that assures the rights of all Rhodesians, black and white, preserves the economic strength of the country, and removes the opportunity for foreign intervention.

We are moving energetically to take advantage of the momentum thus far achieved. A process is in train. We are engaged in frequent consultations with the African states most directly concerned. We have been in close touch with Great Britain,

which has an historic and legal responsibility for Rhodesia. Following my trip to Africa I had useful talks with South African Prime Minister Vorster after which the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs [William E. Schaufele Jr.] returned to Africa for further consultations.

Obviously I cannot go into details about delicate and complicated negotiations which are still in a formative stage. I can say that while the task is formidable it is by no means impossible. If it is to succeed, however, all interested parties will have to do their share.

The white population of Rhodesia must recognize the inevitable and negotiate for a solution which respects its basic interests while there is yet time. South Africa must demonstrate its commitment to Africa by assisting a negotiated outcome. The black African states—especially those most directly concerned—must provide guidance, encourage unity among black leaders, and help ease the transition to a government based on majority rule and minority rights. The black leaders of Rhodesia must submerge their differences and outline a future of cooperation and racial coexistence in an independent Zimbabwe.

Failure would be serious, but it will not occur because of lack of effort by the United States.

We have made progress. We will continue on our course with hope and dedication.

While Rhodesia is the most immediately dangerous of the problems of southern Africa, the future of Namibia is also of deep concern.

The former German colony of South-West Africa was a mandated territory of South Africa from 1920 until the United Nations terminated the mandate in 1966. Five years ago the International Court of Justice held that South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia was illegal. The United States supported both of those decisions, and voted for a U.N. resolution calling for South Africa to take specific steps toward Namibia's self-determination and independence by August 1976. That deadline is now upon us.

Progress in solving the Namibian problem has become imperative. A source of international discord for many years, Namibia, like Rhodesia, contains the seeds of greater conflict. With thousands of foreign troops north of the Namibian border and with intensifying warfare in Rhodesia, a far more volatile climate for violence exists in

southern Africa. The risks of confrontation mount. Time is running out.

The United States strongly supports self-determination and independence for Namibia. We urge South Africa to permit the people and all the political groups of Namibia to express themselves freely, under U.N. supervision, and to participate in determining the future of their country. We support also a firm date for self-determination for Namibia. At the same time we urge the African groups concerned to approach negotiations in a spirit of conciliation. We are working actively in this direction.

- We are convinced that a solution can be found protecting the interests of all who live and work in Namibia. Once concrete steps are underway, the United States will ease its restrictions on trade and investment in Namibia and provide economic and technical assistance to help that nation consolidate its independence.

The problem of South Africa itself is more complex. No one, including the responsible leaders of black Africa, challenges the right of white South Africans to live in their country. They are not colonialists; historically they are an African people; they have lived on African soil for 300 years. But South Africa's internal structure is explosive and incompatible with any concept of human dignity.

Racial discrimination is a blight which afflicts many nations of the world. But South Africa is unique in institutionalizing discrimination in an all-pervasive, enforced separation of the races which mocks any definition of human equality. The recent clashes in black urban townships and black universities in South Africa are a vivid expression of the frustration of black South Africans toward a system that denies them status, dignity, or political rights. The United States appeals to South Africa to heed these warning signals. The United States, true to its own beliefs, will use all its influence to encourage peaceful change, an end to institutionalized inequality, and equality of opportunity and basic human rights in South Africa.

The new momentum of our policy in southern Africa has been welcomed by African leaders of all political persuasions. It has found widespread support around the world. It has given heart to moderate leaders and friends of America. It is the best chance for peaceful solutions and for a secure

and just future for Africa free of outside intervention.

There are grounds for hope. What is needed now is vision and courage among the groups and governments involved, and in America public support and understanding for the course which we are pursuing. In this spirit the United States appeals to all nations and parties involved to take rapid, responsible, and cooperative steps and thereby spare countless thousands the agony and sacrifices that violence brings:

- We appeal to the current Rhodesian authorities to begin urgent talks for an independent Zimbabwe while the future of the white population can still be negotiated peacefully and guarantees are yet attainable. On this basis let all Rhodesians, black and white, end the bloodshed and work together to create a new nation in which all races coexist and cooperate in peace.

- We appeal to the Republic of South Africa to recognize that the wind of change is again blowing through Africa. Let it end its increasing isolation and demonstrate its commitment to Africa by making a positive contribution to the humane evolution of the continent.

- We appeal to the black African nations of southern Africa to continue the statesmanlike effort which they have already begun. They have declared that peace and stability can only be built upon a settlement that takes account of the legitimate interests of all the groups and races involved. Let them help make these pronouncements a reality.

- And we appeal to the former colonial powers to use their valued, continuing ties to Africa to promote justice, peace, and economic progress for Africa, turning the legacy of the past into a proud and positive future.

Let all the nations and groups make a conscious and dedicated effort to overcome the hatred and distrust of generations. This cannot be easy. But to repeat the past is to perpetuate its anguish. Old injustices cannot be removed by accumulating new ones. At some point, the cycle of violence must be broken and the suffering ended. There will not soon come again an opportunity such as we now have.

Economic Development

The nations of Africa do not want to expend all their energies on the problems of southern Africa. No peoples have more earned the right to economic progress. None have a better prospect to realize their aspiration to economic development. America stands ready to cooperate with Africa on the long-term positive tasks of economic development. The obstacles are vast, but so are the opportunities.

Africa is blessed with immense natural wealth. The ratio of population to resources is more favorable than in almost any other region of the developing world. And there is great potential for increasing agricultural productivity.

But development in Africa must also surmount great handicaps, some faced by developing nations everywhere, others unique to Africa.

First, Africa is encumbered by a cruel legacy of history. The continent is fragmented by frontiers drawn in the colonial period into political units that do not always produce a viable national economy. Tribal divisions often thwart the national cohesion and social organization needed for development. Spanning these states are regions of enormous extremes, from fertile and rich lands to poor and barren deserts.

Second, Africa bears a crushing burden of poverty. Eighteen of the world's 28 least-developed countries are located in Africa. Only 17 percent of the people are literate. Out of every hundred infants born, 15 die before their first birthday; life expectancy is 10 years less than the average in the developing world and almost 30 years less than in the United States.

Third, Africa is the chronic victim of natural disaster. Few regions are so subject to natural catastrophe. For example, drought in the Sahel on the southern edge of the Sahara desert has become chronic; it is altering the ecology of western Africa and has expanded the desert, which now encroaches steadily into once-fertile lands producing famine and suffering.

Fourth, Africa is dependent on the world economy to an extraordinary degree. Many African countries rely almost exclusively on the export of one or two primary products for critical foreign exchange earnings. The world recession and declining raw material prices, together with rising prices

for food and fuel, have hit the African nations harder than any other region of the world.

America has a stake in the economic development of Africa. A world in which half prosper while the other half despair cannot be tranquil; a world which the majority of nations considers unjust is a world of instability, turmoil, and danger.

We have sought to respond to the challenges of African development in four ways:

First, to surmount the economic fragmentation that is the legacy of the colonial era the United States has supported efforts for regional cooperation within Africa. For example, we have offered our help to promote a more efficient regional transportation network in southern Africa. We have stressed the importance of regional cooperation to deal with the pervasive problems of the Sahel. We believe that the African Fund proposed by President Giscard [d'Estaing] of France can be used to encourage other regional initiatives.

Second, to help Africa surmount its pervasive poverty, American trade and investment are crucial and they are rapidly expanding. But they are not enough, especially for the poorest countries. Our bilateral assistance programs are increasingly concentrated on the least-developed countries and on such sectors as food, education, and population where the needs of the poor are greatest. Our requests to the Congress for development assistance for Africa are planned to grow substantially over the coming years.

Third, to reduce Africa's vulnerability to natural disasters, the United States is placing great emphasis on long-term development projects. The time has come for comprehensive international programs aimed at eliminating problems rather than engaging in relief efforts to ease their effects. Last May [May 1, 1976] in Dakar we outlined a program for international cooperation to help the nations of the Sahel develop additional water resources, increase crop acreage by modern agricultural methods, and improve food storage facilities all designed to make the Sahel less vulnerable to crises in the future.

Fourth, the United States has taken the lead in efforts to reform the global economic system for the benefit of the developing nations. We called for and made recommendations to the World

Food Conference of 1974 to expand agricultural production worldwide. In U.N. meetings ever since we have set forth comprehensive proposals to accelerate development. As a result several new institutions and mechanisms of cooperation have been created. We have proposed just means of improving the earnings potential of key raw materials. We have reduced trade barriers to the exports of many developing countries into the United States. We are paying special attention to problems of developing countries at the Multilateral Trade Negotiations now underway in Geneva. We have made proposals for a system of world food security. We are examining ways to help developing countries hard hit by increasing energy costs to improve their energy programs. All these initiatives have special relevance to Africa and bring particular benefits to it.

Economic development in Africa requires the cooperation of all the industrial democracies. No other group of countries—certainly not the Socialist countries—is able to provide similar levels of technology, managerial expertise, or resources. But the industrial democracies must coordinate their programs if they are not to dissipate resources and see their efforts overlap or conflict. This is why the United States has endorsed the imaginative proposal of President Giscard of France for a fund to organize and coordinate Western assistance efforts for Africa. And we are seeking within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development a more general coordination of development efforts among the industrial democracies.

Economic development is a long-term process. Manifestos, rhetorical assaults, or wholesale programs to redistribute wealth are not the answer. Development depends above all on the sustained and substantial effort of the developing countries themselves. And it requires cooperation between industrialized and developing nations. Neither can impose solutions on the other. An atmosphere of rancor, extortion, or unworkable resolutions undermines public support in the industrial nations whose effective contribution is crucial to development. Confrontation leads to retrogression for both the industrial and the developing world. Progress will be sustained only if it benefits both sides.

The choice we all face is between cooperation and chaos. America has made its decision. We will

work with all nations in a constructive spirit to make our interdependence a period of unparalleled progress for all of mankind.

African Independence

The surest way to thwart all hopes for political and economic progress in Africa will be to permit the continent to become an arena in which outside powers contest for spheres of influence. Africa has only recently freed itself of great-power rivalry. The clock must never be turned back.

The United States does not seek any pro-American bloc in Africa. We will accept and support the nonalignment of all nations and groups. But we strongly oppose the efforts of any other nation that seeks to undermine African independence and unity by attempting to establish an exclusive, dominant position. African unity, integrity, and independence are, and will remain, fundamental tenets of our policy.

We have heard it said that there is no need to fear foreign intervention in Africa; that however successful non-African nations may prove to be temporarily, at some indefinite date in the future African nationalism will reassert itself and expel the intruder. But let us not forget that it took generations to throw off colonial powers. The modern forms of intervention are much more refined and more difficult to remove. Those who are threatened or pressured from outside do not have the luxury of waiting for history; they must decide whether to resist or succumb. Advice which counsels adaptation and confidence in the verdict of the future and which pretends that freedom occurs automatically may sentence African nations to decades of outside interference and the entire continent to increasing great-power confrontation.

There is no better guarantee against foreign intervention than the determination of African nations to defend their own independence and unity. Let us, therefore, not minimize the importance of the security problems that some African nations face. I cannot accept the proposition that black African nations do not have the same right as other nations to defend themselves against recognized dangers—especially when their neighbors have been heavily armed by the Soviet Union. We are determined to avoid unnecessary arms races. But when friendly nations like Kenya or Zaire make modest and serious requests for assistance to protect them-

selves against neighbors possessing substantial Soviet arms we owe them our serious consideration.

The ultimate solution is for Africa to strengthen the institutions of its unity and thereby its capacity to insulate African problems from outside involvement. We welcome the efforts of those black African leaders who have specifically warned against great-power involvement in the problems of southern Africa and who have asked the great powers to refrain from supplying individual factions. The United States supports this principle and will abide by it. The United States will do its utmost to help prevent a repetition of the factional and regional rivalries that made it possible for outsiders in Angola to replace a Portuguese army of occupation with a Cuban one.

We will vigorously support African unity, independence, and integrity.

America's Commitment

Distant events touch our lives and our hearts—whether it is a drought in the Sahel, a civil war in Lebanon, or an earthquake in China. In the modern age our consciousness of each other is a moral as well as a practical reality. The future of races, nations, or continents is shared.

That is why America's acceptance of global responsibilities is not an act of generosity, but a wise pursuit of the national interest. If we do not do our best to maintain the peace, it is not just the rest of the world but we, ourselves, who will suffer.

If we fail to help those living in poverty and despair the torrent of revolution and turmoil that will inevitably follow will affect us all. And if we flag in our effort to support the forces of liberty and human dignity we cannot long preserve our own freedom.

For two centuries the oppressed everywhere have known that the Declaration of Independence was addressed not just to Americans, but to all the world. Men and women deprived of freedom in other lands knew that it was an appeal not just to the conscience of this country, but to all mankind.

No group knows better than this one that justice must always be even-handed, that no moral end is served if the contest is defined as which group shall dominate the others. As we defend majority rule we must not neglect minority rights. As we promote economic development we must never forget that economic progress is empty if it does not extend the area of human freedom.

Today one of history's great human dramas is being played out in Africa. There peoples cry out for liberty and economic advance. They will not be denied. The question is whether mankind has learned from its travail; whether the price of freedom must be paid in treasure and lasting hatred.

Let us pray it will not be so. Let us help the voice of reason to prevail in Africa. In so doing we will have reflected America's own values in the world. And we will have taken a great step toward the goal of a true world community of brotherhood that remains our most noble vision.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

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